water supply, adoption of management approach and intensification of software activities such as farmers participation and training etc., besides creation of extension of irrigation net work upto the farm level. The other main elements of the strategy are (i) encouragement to greater user participation in major and medium irrigation projects both at the system level and at local level, substantial increase in the scale of programmes for modernisation and improvement of older irrigations systems, special post evaluation studies for periodic monitoring of actual crop patterns.

Drip Irrigation System

3235. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that drip irrigation system has proved useful and economical in use;

(b) the names of the States where this system has been introduced and with what results; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken to popularise it ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI P. K. THUNGON) : (a) Yes, Sir. The scheme is useful and economical in water shortage areas.

(b) Under the Central Sector Scheme of Drip Irrigation system for horticulture crops, grants-in-aid are being given to all the States/Union Territories by Ministry of Agriculture. The scheme was taken up on a large scale during 1991-92 and proposed to be continued during 8th Five Year Plan. The results available with the Ministry of Agriculture are not enough to assess the impact of the scheme at present.

(c) In addition to the ongoing component of subsidies on drip irrigation systems, new components of demonstrations on functioning of drip irrigation systems on farmers' fields and training/extension efforts are also envisaged in the scheme.

Existing Practice of Harnessing Water Resources

3236. DR. NAUNIHAL SINGH : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the existing practice of harnessing water resources through major and micro dams was not working well due to the cost factor;

(b) if so, what alternatives are being considered by Government as irrigation sources; and

(c) the steps Government have taken to introduce alternate cost-effective methods of irrigation and the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI P. K. THUNGON) : (a) to (c) Irrigation projects are taken up after ascertaining their techno-economic viability and hence there is no question of their not being cost effective. The economic returns from irrigation projects are assessed on the basis of the benefits accrued in terms of increase in agricultural production and other general socio-economic developments in the concerned area of such projects in addition to providing water for drinking, municipal and industrial use and generation of hydro-electric power and not only on the basis of revenue generated by way of water charges levied. The nature of the projects depends upon the nature of the location, water availability and several other technical parameters. It is only after assessing the technical data of a particular location and the economics involved, decision is taken about the type of projects to be constructed.

The National Water Policy has laid down that the water rates should be adequate to cover the annual maintenance and operation charges and a part of the fixed costs of the projects. The State Government who implement and operate the irrigation projects are advised to make efforts to reach this ideal over a period while ensuring assured irrigation.